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Blue Dog Leadership Unveils Statutory PAYGO Bill

Legislation would give pay-as-you-go rules force of law in House, Senate

Washington, DC – Today, under the leadership of **Representative Baron Hill** (D-IN), the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition unveiled H.R. 2116, the “Fiscal Honesty and Accountability Act of 2009,” a measure that would strengthen Congress’ commitment to fiscal responsibility and accountability by reinstituting statutory pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) rules. The legislation, which would require both the House and Senate to abide by PAYGO rules if enacted into law, has been a cornerstone of the Blue Dogs’ efforts to restore fiscal discipline to the federal government.

“Hoosier families have to live within a balanced budget, and so too should Congress,” Hill said. “And, Congress should have to strictly adhere to PAYGO, thus transforming PAYGO rules to having the force of the law behind it. The President’s support of this measure is much appreciated and a huge bolster of efforts to make sure we do not leave our children and grandchildren with massive debt.”

In his latest radio address, President Obama specifically called on Congress to pass PAYGO legislation like the bill introduced by Rep. Hill, stating that “we need to adhere to the basic principle that new tax or entitlement policies should be paid for.”

“The Blue Dog Coalition has made significant gains recently in our effort to reinstate statutory PAYGO, first with the strong endorsement by the President and now with a Congressional Budget and a commitment by House Leadership that will force statutory PAYGO through the legislative process,” said **Representative Allen Boyd** (D-FL), Chair of the Blue Dog Task Force on Budget and Financial Services. “By putting PAYGO back into law we will end years of budgetary mismanagement and irresponsible deficit spending and put the federal government back on a path toward fiscal responsibility and long-term sustainability. The Blue Dogs will continue to work with the President and the Senate and House Leadership in the coming weeks to accelerate this issue even more and put statutory PAYGO back on the books.”

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“We cannot continue to kick this can down the road. With the President’s support, the Blue Dogs look forward to enacting PAYGO into law, a critical step toward putting the country back on a fiscally sustainable path,” said **Representative Charlie Melancon** (D-LA), Blue Dog Co-Chair for Communications. “If we do not take action now, we will continue to short-change future generations who will face higher taxes and cuts to federal investments in priorities such as education, health care and national security.

“Statutory pay-as-you-go is critical for holding Congress accountable and safeguarding taxpayer funds,” said **Representative Stephanie Herseth Sandlin** (D-SD), Blue Dog Co-Chair for Administration. “I’m pleased with the Administration’s continued support of this top Blue Dog priority and will continue working with the President and leaders in the House and Senate to ensure that Congress has this strong and necessary tool at its disposal to enforce fiscal discipline.”

The fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition was formed in 1995 with the goal of representing the center of the House of Representatives and appealing to the mainstream values of the American public. The Blue Dogs are dedicated to a core set of beliefs that transcend partisan politics, including a deep commitment to the financial stability and national security of the United States. Currently there are 51 members of the Blue Dog Coalition..

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